WHO FIRED IT?

We Mean "The Shot Heard Round the World."

CONCORD VS. LEXINGTON.

The First Battle of the Revolution Being Fought Again.

DID PARKER'S MEN RETURN THE FIRE?

The Lexington Massacre and the Concord Fight.

Bancroft and Washington Irving Enlaurel Lexington.

Mr. Frederic Hudson Claims the Honor for Concord.

MR. G. W. CURTIS CROWNS BOTH.

Opinions of the Oldest Inhabitants of the Two Towns.

INTERESTING SKETCH OF CONCORD.

A Lecture by Dr. Storrs on the Great Opening of the Revolution.

BOSTON, April 15, 1875.

The rival celebrations of Concord and Lexington are based upon the idea of each town that the war began within its limits. This point being in dispute, I called to-day upon some of the leading citizens to ascertain their views in regard to the matter at issue.

WHAT MR. CHARLES HUDSON SAYS.

The first person to whom I spoke was Mr. Charles Hudson, of Lexington, a very prominent man, and the historian of that place.

Mr. Hudson said that upon one point—viz., that the first blood shed on the 19th of April, 1775, was in Lexington—there was no dispute. He said he believed, however, that Concord claimed that the volley fired by the British on Lexington common was not returned. This was a mistake. There is ample testimony to show that the fire on that day was returned. Elijah Sanderson made out the case very clearly in 1827, and it seems reasonably certain that Pitcairn's horse was wounded by one of the shots from the retreating patriots. Not only did Solomon Brown repeatedly fire at them from Buckman's Tavern, but many other shots were also fired.

WHAT MR. MUZZY SAYS.

After conversing with Mr. Hudson I spoke to Mr. Muzzy, one of the encyclopædias of the town, who merely laughed very heartily at the idea that there could be any dispute in regard to the point. He said the first blood shed between the British and the armed Americans was shed at Lexington.

WHAT MR. JAMES C. MELVIN SAYS.

Subsequently I conversed with Mr. James C. Melvin, of Concord, on the same subject.

Mr. Melvin drew a very funny picture of the devices of the Lexington people to secure for themselves the chief glory of the 19th of April, and said that Concord never claimed that the first blood shed in the Revolution was spilled in that town. Undoubtedly eight patriots were killed by the British in Lexington before Davis and Hosmer lost their lives at Concord Bridge.

WHAT CONCORD CLAIMS.

It must be remembered, however, that there were massacres by the British troops before the massacre at Lexington, though none were so effective in arousing the American people. What Concord claims is, that the first armed resistance was made in that town; that the fight at Concord North Bridge was the first time the Americans met the British grenadiers in arms, and, consequently, that that battle, as glorious in itself almost as in its consequences, was the actual beginning of the War of the Revolution.

FREDERIC HUDSON'S OPINION.

CONCORD, Mass., April 15, 1875.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE HERALD:—

I see by the HERALD of this morning that you have some doubts in regard to where the shot was fired in April, 1775, which was "heard round the world." It is strange that a journal so well informed on all subjects should have a single doubt on this important event. There are two points in the progress of events on the 19th of April, 1775, clearly established:—

First—That the Concord fight, which opened the war of the Revolution, took place at the Old North Bridge in Concord, at half-past nine o'clock in the morning.

Second—That the battle of Lexington, so-called, took place after the British had been driven out of Concord, and at two o'clock in the afternoon, and on the arrival of Hugh Percy's reinforcement from Boston. The latter, in fact, was simply a continuation of the Concord fight, but assumed larger military proportion by increased strength on both sides and the presence of two pieces of artillery with Percy's troops.

In your editorial remarks you ignore the claims of Concord and give all the glory to Lexington. This seems to me

UNJUST TO CONCORD.

There is no doubt that the first American blood was shed in Lexington. There was a massacre there "in the gray of the morning," but the first British blood was shed in Concord, and the first effectual resistance to England was made in that town.

THE EVIDENCE.

I send you the sworn statement of Captain Parker to show you what was done in Lexington on the arrival of the enemy:—

JOHN PARKER'S AFFIDAVIT.

LEXINGTON, April 25, 1775.

I, John Parker, of lawful age, and commander of the militia in Lexington, do testify and declare that on the 19th inst., in the morning, about one o'clock, being informed that there were a number of the regular officers riding up and down the road, stopping and insulting people as they passed on the road, and also was informed that a number of the regular troops were on their march from Boston, in order to take the Province stores at Concord, ordered our militia to meet on the common in said Lexington to consult what to do, and concluded not to be discovered nor meddle or make with said regular troops, if they should approach, unless they should insult or molest us, and upon their sudden approach I immediately ordered our militia to disperse and not to fire.

Immediately said troops made their appearance, and, rushing furiously, fired upon and killed eight of our party, without receiving any provocation therefor from us. JOHN PARKER.

What was done in Concord? I send you the affidavit of Colonel Barrett, which speaks for itself:—

COLONEL BARRETT'S AFFIDAVIT.

LEXINGTON, April 23, 1775.

I, James Barrett, of Concord, colonel of a regiment of militia in the county of Middlesex, do testify and say that on Wednesday morning last, about daybreak, I was informed of the approach of a number of the regular troops to the town of Concord, where were some magazines belonging to this Province. When there was assembled some of the militia of this and the neighboring towns, I ordered them to march to the North Bridge, so-called, which they had passed and were taking up. I ordered said militia to march to said bridge and pass the same, but not to fire on the King's troops unless they were first fired upon. We advanced near said bridge, when the said troops fired upon our militia and killed two men dead on the spot and wounded several others, which was the first firing of guns in the town of Concord. My detachment then returned the fire, which killed and wounded several of the King's troops. JAMES BARRETT.

These sworn statements were made before a committee of the Provincial Congress specially elected for the purpose. I do not wish to take one tittle from the good and patriotic name of Lexington. Her sons were as gallant and as brave as the best in the Revolution. I hope she will have

A SPLENDID TIME NEXT MONDAY.

My only purpose is to show you that what I have detailed in the sketch of the Concord fight prepared for *Harper's Magazine*, which you have so kindly noticed, are facts not to be controverted.

FREDERIC HUDSON.

VIEWS OF GEORGE WILLIAM CURTIS.

As the question whether Concord or Lexington can claim the honor of having fired the first shot in the cause of American independence is one of peculiar interest just now, the writer sought to obtain the views of a man who is pre-eminently qualified to judge of the merits of each claim, being one of the profoundest of American scholars and thinkers and one who has made the history of his native country an especial study—George William Curtis. Mr. Curtis has been selected to deliver the centennial oration in Concord on Monday next, and would undoubtedly devote particular attention to the solution of this vexing question—vexing because it has kindled a spirit of rivalry and jealousy which the American patriot can only deplore. At least this is the light in which the great savant looks at it. At the same time his opinion is one calculated to restore peace and concord to Concord and Lexington by distributing the glory between both claimants. This view he does not express merely for the purpose of ending the disagreeable strife, but because it is absolutely founded on historical facts. *A la* Beecher, he answers, when asked whether Concord or Lexington deserves the wreath of national glory, "No and yes," and makes both cities happy at the same time.

Mr. Curtis is a student of the great wars which have rent this Continent, and it is gratifying to be able to state on his authority that the present rivalry between the two birthplaces of American liberty will not, in his opinion, result in fratricidal bloodshed. At the same time he holds out no delusive hope that the controversy will ever be satisfactorily settled so as to merge future celebrations of the great event into one. Concord and discord are both to flourish in the future, unless the two cities clasp hands across the harmonizing and all-embracing opinion of George William Curtis.

Mr. Curtis does most of his writing at his pretty residence in Bard avenue, New Brighton. The house stands in a beautifully cultivated garden, and its interior is replete with all the evidences of scholarly taste and literary culture. The study is to the right of the entrance, and there Mr. Curtis sat, surrounded by his books and pictures, and wielding that instrument which in his hand is certainly mightier than many a sword—the pen. The room is literally walled with books, and the familiar faces of Charles Sumner, Ralph Waldo Emerson and other distinguished friends of Mr. Curtis, looked down from the mantelpiece, on which a number of photographs were arranged. Mr. Curtis' manner is that of the polished, courtly gentleman of the old school, and when requested to embody his views in a brief letter to the HERALD, he immediately wrote the following, in which he disposes of the question in his terse style:—

MR. CURTIS' LETTER TO THE HERALD.

WEST NEW BRIGHTON, STATEN ISLAND, N. Y., April 15, 1875.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE HERALD:—

You wish me to say whether I think that Concord or Lexington can claim the first shot in the war of the Revolution.

At Lexington the militia, sixty or seventy in number, were drawn up in line, and, refusing to disperse at the British summons, were fired upon by the British, at least 600 strong. Then the Americans were ordered to retire, and as they did so a few returned the British fire. At Concord the Americans resolved to cross the Old North Bridge, which was held by the British, and were advancing for that purpose when the British fired. Then the Americans were ordered to return the fire, which they did, and the British retreated. The affair at Concord was deliberate, intentional, organized resistance. At Lexington it was a massacre, at Concord a battle, and the Americans were as wise in retiring at Lexington as they were in advancing at Concord. Respectfully, yours, GEORGE WILLIAM CURTIS.

LEXINGTON TECHNICALLY RIGHT.

The explanations incident to the writing of this letter led to some pregnant remarks by Mr. Curtis. "In general my understanding of the facts," he observed, "agrees with that of Mr. Frederic Hudson, whose article I have read with great pleasure, and who has undoubtedly furnished us by far the best account of the great events of the day we have had. If I differ with him, it is only in a matter of detail, namely, in the conviction that the Americans did fire some straggling shots at the British at Lexington. Hence, although the battle actually took place at Concord, and the encounter at Lexington was but a very insignificant affair as compared to that, the latter place must be awarded the palm in the technical issue as to which fired the first shot. Of course, it was merely a preliminary skirmish, a prelude to the battle of Concord in which the first victory was won, so that it is Concord, after all, which substantially carries off the honors of the day."

MR. CURTIS' AUTHORITIES.

Mr. Curtis pointed out that Mr. Hudson in speaking of the skirmish at Lexington makes no mention of the firing by the Americans. "Captain Parker," thus Mr. Hudson concludes this portion of his intensely interesting narrative, "the commander of the (American) militia company, ordered his men to disperse and not to fire." He omits to add that in the teeth of this order they did fire. Mr. Curtis said that both Richard Frothingham and Edward Everett, who were very careful and accurate authorities, agreed that there were scattering shots from the Americans. Mr. Curtis readily pointed out the passages in both authors alluding to this event. In his oration at Lexington of the 20th of April, 1835, Everett says:—"Captain Parker now felt the necessity of directing his men to disperse, but it was not until several of them had returned the British fire, and some of them more than once, that his handful of brave men were driven from the field." And Richard Frothingham, in his "History of the Siege of Boston and of the Battles of Lexington, Concord and Bunker Hill," says:—"A few of the militia who had been wounded, or who saw others killed or wounded by their side, no longer hesitated but returned the fire of the regulars."

AN INTERESTING NOTE.

And in a marginal note the historian says:—"The contemporary evidence of this return fire is too positive to be set aside. In the counter manifesto to Gage's proclamation, prepared in June, 1775, which was not published at the time, it is said that the British "in a most barbarous and infamous manner fired upon a small number of the inhabitants and cruelly murdered eight men. The fire was returned by some of the survivors, but their number was too inconsiderable to annoy the regular troops, who proceeded on their errand, and upon coming up to Concord," &c. I copy from MS. in Massachusetts archives. Gordon, May 17, 1775, says that James Brown informed him that, "being got over the wall, and seeing the soldiers fire pretty freely, he fired upon them, and some others did the same." Deposition No. 8, of 1775, is clear:—"About five o'clock in the morning we attended the beat of our drum and were formed on the parade. We were faced toward the regulars then marching up to us, and some of our company were coming to the parade with their backs toward the troops; and others on the parade began to disperse, when the regulars fired on the company before a gun was fired by any of our company on them." The great point was as to who fired first. Clark says:—"So far from firing first upon the King's troops, upon the most careful inquiry it appears that but very few of our people fired at all, and even they did not fire till, after being fired upon by the troops, they were wounded themselves," &c. Phinney's history contains the details, with depositions, which, as to the main fact, are supported by the authorities of 1775. All the British accounts state that the fire was returned, or rather they state that it was begun by the militia. This last assertion, made in Gage's handbill, was contradicted. Much controversy took place about it, and the Provincial Congress' account was prepared in reference to it. As late as May 3, 1776, a London journal says:—"It is whispered that the Ministry are endeavoring to fix a certainty which party fired first at Lexington, before hostilities commenced, as the Congress declare, if it can be proved that American blood was first shed, it will go a great way toward effecting a reconciliation with most favorable terms."

Even William Gordon, the British historian, says in his account of the encounter:—"Individuals (meaning Americans), finding they were fired upon though dispersing, had spirit enough to stop and return the fire."

THE GREAT POINT.

"The great point," remarked Mr. Curtis, apropos of these statements, "is that at Lexington the Americans did not fire as a line, but simply as individuals, while dispersing."

"But as far as the honors of the first shot are concerned you award them to Lexington?"

"Oh, it was practically one affair," Mr. Curtis replied, with a deprecating smile; "the British troops only tarried twenty minutes at Lexington and then marched on to Concord, where they found it was quite a different affair. Had it not been for Concord the day would have marked a massacre if not a defeat of the Americans."

And thus Mr. Curtis, who was evidently born to be a diplomatist, distributed the laurels equally between both rivals, adding, in a tone of good-natured regret, "it's really very disagreeable that there should be this friction."

"And do you not think the controversy will be settled one of these days?"

"Oh, no," Mr. Curtis returned with a laugh; "seven cities claimed Homer, and why should not two claim the first shot in the War of Independence?"

This question was unanswerable, and the interview very suddenly collapsed.

WHAT THE HISTORIANS SAY.

In view of the controversy that has arisen among the several towns in Massachusetts more or less connected with the honor of having "fired the first shot that was heard around the world," at the beginning of the American Revolution, it may be interesting to refer to contemporaneous history touching upon the subject. For example, in Irving's "Life of Washington," vol. 1, pp. 430-431, we find:—

WASHINGTON IRVING'S ACCOUNT.

On the night of the 18th of April, 1775, Dr. Warren sent off two messengers, by different routes, to give the alarm that the King's troops were actually sallying forth. The messengers got out of Boston just before the order of General Gage went into effect to prevent any one from leaving the town. About the same time a lantern was hung out of an upper window of the North Church in the direction of Charlestown. This was a preconcerted signal to the patriots of that place, who instantly despatched swift messengers to rouse the country. In the meantime Colonel Smith, the British commander, set out on his nocturnal march from Lechmere Point by an unfrequented path across marshes, where at times the troops had to wade through water. He had proceeded but a few miles when alarm guns, booming through the night air, and the clang of village bells showed that the news of his approach was travelling before him and the people were rising. He now sent back to General Gage for a reinforcement, while Major Pitcairn was detached with six companies to press forward and secure the bridge at Concord. Pitcairn advanced rapidly, capturing every one that he met or overtook. Within a mile and a half of Lexington, however, a horseman was too quick on the spur for him, and galloping to the village gave the alarm that the redcoats were coming. Drums were beaten, guns fired. By the time that Pitcairn entered the village about seventy or eighty of the yeomanry, in military array, were mustered on the green, near the church. It was a part of the "Constitutional Army," pledged to resist by force any open hostility of British troops. Besides these there were a number of lookers-on armed and unarmed. The sound of drum and the array of men in arms indicated a hostile demonstration. Pitcairn halted his men within a short distance of the church, and ordered them to prime and load. They then advanced at double quick time, the Major riding forward and ordering the rebels, as he termed them, to disperse. Other officers echoed his words as they advanced, "Disperse, ye villains!" "Lay down your arms, ye rebels, and disperse!" The orders were disregarded. A scene of confusion ensued, with firing on both sides; which party commenced it has been a matter of dispute. Pitcairn always maintained that, finding the militia would not disperse, he turned to order his men to draw out and surround them, when he saw a flash in the pan from the gun of a countryman posted behind a wall, and almost instantly the report of two or three muskets. These he supposed to be from the Americans, as his horse was wounded, as was also a soldier close by him. His troops rushed on and a promiscuous fire took place, though, as he declared, he made repeated signals with his sword for his men to forbear. The firing of the Americans was irregular and without much effect; that of the British was more fatal: eight of the patriots were killed and ten wounded, and the whole put to flight. The victors formed on the Common, fired a volley, and gave three cheers for one of the most inglorious and disastrous triumphs ever achieved by British arms.

BANCROFT'S ACCOUNT.

In Bancroft's "History of the United States," vol. vii., pp. 292-293, the following version of the same affair is given:—

The last stars were vanishing from night when the foremost party, led by Pitcairn, a major of marines, was discovered advancing quickly and in silence. Alarm guns were fired, and the drums beat, not a call to village husbandmen only, but the reveille to humanity. Less than seventy, perhaps less than sixty, obeyed the summons, and in sight of half as many boys and unarmed men were paraded in two ranks a few rods north of the meeting house. * * * The British van, hearing the drum and the alarm guns, halted to load; the remaining companies came up, and at half an hour before sunrise the advance party hurried forward at double quick time and almost upon a run, closely followed by the Grenadiers. Pitcairn rode in front, and when within five or six rods of the minute man, cried out:—"Disperse, ye villains; ye rebels, disperse; lay down your arms; why don't you lay down your arms and disperse?" The main part of the countrymen stood motionless in the ranks, witnesses against aggression, too few to resist, too brave to fly. At this Pitcairn discharged a pistol, and with a loud voice cried, "Fire!" The order was instantly followed, first by a few guns, which did no execution, and then by a heavy, close and deadly discharge of musketry. In the disparity of numbers, the Common was a field of murder, not of battle. Parker, therefore, ordered his men to disperse. Then, and not till then, did a few of them, on their own impulse, return the British fire. These random shots of fugitives or dying men did no harm, except that Pitcairn's horse was, perhaps, grazed, and a private in the Tenth light infantry was touched slightly in the leg.

FIRST BLOOD AT LEXINGTON.

FIRST BLOOD AT CONCORD.

The above cuts, portraying the scenes at the opening of the Revolutionary War, are illustrations of Mr. Frederic Hudson's interesting article in *Harper's Magazine*. The scene at Lexington is that at the moment the British regulars fired upon the dispersing militia under Parker; the scene at the Concord Bridge is at the instant the militia, under Colonel Barrett, returned the fire of the British. Whether Parker's men did or did not return the fire is the question between Concord and Lexington just now.

BOSTON BESTIRRING HERSELF.

BOSTON, April 15, 1875.

The interest in the approaching Concord and Lexington Centennial absorbs every other topic, and the outpouring of the people on Monday next will be unexampled. The statues of John Hancock and John Adams, both of which are to be unveiled at Lexington, will arrive in time. That of the former is below, on the brig J. L. Bowen, and that of the latter is on the Cunard steamer Parthia, which is due to-morrow. The Marine Band arrived to-day on the United States steamer Tallapoosa.

THE TOWN OF CONCORD.

CONCORD, Mass., April 14, 1875.

Concord is indeed a pleasant town, and though Mr. James Russell Lowell has sung of its modern population that

——nowadays the bridge ain't wat they show
So much ez Em'son, Hawthorne and Thoreau,

it is the grandest village in all America in its past as well as its present. "Concord fight" has given it a history which no other town can justly claim, and it has, besides, maintained itself so well in bearing its proud pre-eminence that nobody will deny that it is in every way worthy of its history. People who have been sounding the praises of New England have made it typical of New England towns in general; but the truth is it is as much unlike the manufacturing villages as the adobe hamlets of New Mexico. In the factory towns the houses are not built in streets, but set up in rows. One dwelling is as much like another as the brother tenpins in a bowling alley. In Concord each house betrays the taste of its owner, and nearly every dwelling has its traditions and its story. Coming into the village by the Lexington road—the way the grenadiers came in 1775—the first building of note is the Wayside School in the house built by Hawthorne when he determined to desert the Old Manse. It is a wooden structure, two stories in height, and is surmounted by a little box overlooking the roof in which the sky romancist had his study. This box was accessible only by a trap, upon which the novelist placed his library chair, and, by thus keeping the world at bay, justified the lines of the poet in which he is described as one

——with genius so shrinking and rare
That you hardly at first see the strength that is there.

A little further on and still nearer the village is Alcott's residence, the home also of his two gifted daughters. It is an old house, neglected in appearance, but surrounded by ample grounds, which are capable of being made very lovely in the springtime and summer. A rustic fence, now also much in decay, built of pine and cedar branches, gathered from the neighboring thickets and woven together by Mr. Alcott's own hands, encloses the grounds and separates them from the street. Across the way and still a little nearer the village, just before the turn of the road and the ridge, which forms the background of all this picture, reveals the more thickly settled part of the town, is the dwelling of Ralph Waldo Emerson. It is a square house, without pretensions, and lacks charms of any kind in its situation and surroundings. The ground on which it stands is low and almost marshy, and being across the street it has not the ridge behind it as have the others to lend it picturesqueness. Then comes the village proper, hugging the hill on the north and east and kissing the river to the south and west. Here the main street intersects the road, extending from a point opposite the old graveyard, which forms the centre of the ridge, almost in the direction of the old South Bridge, held by a company of British grenadiers April 19, 1775, while their comrades were being beaten a mile below. On this street is the house where next Sunday President Grant, like Hosea Biglow, is to go

——a-visitin' the judge,
Whose garding whispers with the river's edge.

Near to Judge Hoar's is the rural retreat of Mr. Frederic Hudson, whose "History of Journalism in the United States" is a proud monument to his own achievements in the journalistic profession. Thoreau, who was a recluse, lived farther away at Walden Pond, while near the North Bridge, where the first battle of the Revolution took place is the Old Manse, celebrated as the residence of the Rev. William Emerson, the grandfather of the Carlyle of Concord and the minister here in the Revolutionary era. Mr. Emerson witnessed the battle between the men whom his grandson has so grandly named the "embattled farmers" and the British grenadiers from an upper window of his house, which commanded a view of both positions, and he testified in his diary that after the invader discharged his first shot he "was uneasy till the fire was returned," though he knew that "their numbers were more than treble ours."

THE PROVINCIAL PARADE GROUND.

The spot overlooked by the bold and patriotic Concord clergyman, soon to become so famous in history, is now known as the Provincial Parade Ground. The English were first on the ground and held the town. It was a long wait which the patriots had that night, for Mr. Longfellow has told us in his cantering verse of the midnight ride of Paul Revere that—

It was one by the village clock
When he galloped into Lexington.

And the poet added, with something of poetic license, it must be confessed, that—

It was two by the village clock,
When he came to the bridge in Concord town.
He heard the bleating of the flock
And the twitter of birds among the trees,
And felt the breath of the morning breeze
Blowing over the meadows brown.

If Paul Revere had reached Concord at all that night he would have come to the town before he got to the bridge; but the truth is that he was captured at Lexington, and the rest of his self-imposed duty was performed by Samuel Prescott, a young doctor belonging to Concord, who carried the news of the affray on the green to his townsman. But this is history, and we have only to do with the parade ground, where the provincials marched down from the contiguous slopes to battle for their country. It is a beautiful spot by nature, and capable of every adornment which art can bestow. The lazy stream creeps idly by, and on its banks, where they fell that day, sleep the two British soldiers, the first of the enemy to fall in the struggle for American Independence. A stone wall, extending from the river to the highway, has been built over their grave, and a rude stone, rudely carved, tells the place of their sepulture. Near by is the votive tablet raised in 1835 to commemorate the deed, and across the stream, now as then spanned by a simple bridge, is the spot where the "embattled farmers" stood and Davis and Hosmer fell. The new statue of the "minute man" leaving his plough turned in the furrow, but bearing his trusty rifle with him, has been erected here; and here, in sight of the hills from which the provincials fled two and two to the music of the "White Cockade," it will be unveiled on Monday. The scene has changed but little in a hundred years, and the spirit which animated the American people then still survives to find expression on this spot. The hills and fields are still the same, a few fences more and a few stones less being the only changes wrought by time in the arena of the Concord fight. As I stood on this historic ground this morning, the early sunshine bathing the hills with life and light, and recalled all that had ever been told me of that glorious day, the whole scene seemed to reawaken in my imagination, and I could almost see the astonished grenadiers turn and flee by the road they had come, while

——the farmers gave them ball for ball
From behind each fence and barnyard wall,
Chasing the redcoats down the lane,
Then orossing the fields to emerge again
Under the trees at the turn of the road,
And only pausing to fire and load.

UNCHANGING CONCORD.

Few battle scenes have undergone so few changes. In twelve years the marks of the great struggle at Gettysburg have been more obliterated than the field of Concord fight in a hundred. But Concord is slow to change in any respect. It clings as tenaciously to its old customs as to its old memories. So strikingly is this fact illustrated that it is almost a Puritan village to-day. True, the Irish have come here as they come everywhere where they are needed—Pat to do the farmwork, which John Hancock, as a boy, would hardly have deigned to refuse, and Bridget to do the cooking and baking, in which Dorothy Quincy was an adept; and they have built their snug little Catholic church, surmounted with the symbol so hurtful to the Puritan conscience, right in the heart of the village. So also the post could sing with truth of Emerson, who is the great high priest of Concord philosophy to-day, as his grandfather was the chief judge and arbiter of Concord theology a hundred years ago, that

'Tis refreshing to old-fashioned people like me
To meet such a primitive pagan as he,
In whose mind all creation is duly respected
As parts of himself—just a little projected.

But, in spite of its Catholic church and its Unitarian departure from old-fashioned Presbyterianism and its pagan philosophy, Concord is still, as I said before, almost a Puritan town, and in proof of it I submit the following curious document, which I encountered everywhere in my rambles over the village:—

COMMONWEALTH
—OF—
MASSACHUSETTS.

MIDDLESEX, ss. To either of the Constables of the Town of Concord.

GREETING:—

You are hereby authorized and directed to notify and warn the qualified voters of the

FIRST PARISH IN CONCORD,

in said County of Middlesex, to meet at the Vestry of the Meeting House of said First Parish,

on MONDAY, the 12th day of April inst.,

at seven and one-half o'clock in the evening, then and there to act and vote upon the following articles, to wit:—

1st—To choose a Moderator.

2d—To hear and act upon the report of the Parish Committee.

3d—To hear and act upon the report of the Trustees of the Congregational Ministerial Fund.

4th—To choose all Parish Officers for the ensuing year.

5th—To see if the Parish will dispense with the Evening Service during the summer months.

6th—To raise money for all Parochial purposes for the ensuing year.

7th—To see if the Parish will fix any time for the Payment of Taxes, or act in any way in regard to the same.

And you are hereby directed to serve this warrant by posting copies thereof, by you attested, in at least three public places in said town, one of which shall be at the door of the Meeting House, eight days and including two Sundays before said 12th day of April, and to have this warrant, with your doings thereon, at said meeting.

Witness our hands this third day of April, in the year of our Lord one thousand eight hundred and seventy-five.

JOHN BROWN,
HENRY F. SMITH,
GEORGE P. HOW,
} Parish Committee.

A true copy: Attest.

The Constable attests this with his own hand and publishes it, and all the members of the First church are as much bound by it as the people of New York are bound by the action of the Tax Commissioners or whatever body it is that has authority to assess them, so that it will be seen that in Concord religion is still a matter of the State of which the minions of the law have official cognizance. Only one or two parishes besides—probably only Quincy—still retains this relic of Puritanism; but it is, I think, conclusive proof that Concord is unchanging Concord.

THE TOWN LIBRARY OF CONCORD.

But if Concord is slower than most places in some respects it is also faster than all other towns in others. It has, for instance, the best town library in the United States; the most unique, the handsomest and the airiest building; the best selection of books and the largest number and best set of readers. The building is the gift of William Munroe, who was a Boston merchant resident in the town. He planned and built it at his own expense, and left a sufficient fund to prevent it from ever going to decay, and then did not even ask or consent that it should be called by his name. Mr. Munroe's bust has been placed in the library apartment, just in front of the alcove devoted to "Concord authors," and this is the only evidence of his munificence to be seen anywhere about the building. The Concord alcove contains the writings of Emerson, Hawthorne, Thoreau, the Alcotts, father and daughter, Mrs. Jane Austin, and others of scarcely less note than some of these. Among the curiosities of this alcove is a volume of sermons preached in Concord more than 230 years ago. The title of this book is as follows:—

THE GOSPEL COVENANT; OR, THE COVENANT OF GRACE OPENED—

wherein are explained

1. The difference between the covenant of grace and covenant of works.
2. The different administration of the covenant before and since Christ.
3. The benefits and blessings of it.
4. The condition.
5. The properties of it.

Preached in Concord, in New England, by Peter Bulkeley, sometime fellow of John's College, in Cambridge.

Published according to order.

London, printed by M. S. for Benjamin Allen, and are to be sold at the Crowne, in Popes-head Alley, 1646.

This old book was picked up in London by Mr. George F. Hoar, member of Congress from Worcester, and by him it was presented to the library of his native town two years ago. In such a town, with such a library and such associations and such great men, it is no wonder we should be told—

Yonder, calm as a cloud, Alcott stalks in a dream,
And fancies himself in thy groves, Academe,
With the Parthenon high and the olive bees o'er him,
And never a fact to perplex him or bore him,
With a snug room at Plato's when night comes to walk to,
And people from morning till midnight to talk to.

The inhabitants are as remarkable as the town itself; but it would take a volume to tell even half of what I know about them.

CONCORD CELEBRATIONS IN THE PAST.

As Concord fight began the American Revolution, so Concord town has been celebrating it ever since. In 1825, fifty years after the conflict at North Bridge, the corner stone of a monument was laid in the centre of the village to commemorate the event. Edward Everett, then in the freshness and splendor of his powers as an orator, delivered the oration—one of the greatest efforts of his life. In 1836 the modest monument on the site of the British position was erected, and it was for that occasion Ralph Waldo Emerson wrote the splendid hymn now so often quoted. In 1850 there was a general celebration at Concord of all the towns, Lexington participating. On this occasion Robert Rantoul, Jr., of Beverly, was the orator, and Everett was present and made one of the after-dinner speeches. Rufus Choate was also among the guests, and responded to the toast of "Lexington Common and Concord North Bridge," closing with his famous sentiment of "American Nationality." On the platform were Jonathan Harrington, of Lexington, aged ninety-two, and Amos Baker, of Lincoln, of the age of ninety-four, both participants in the events of that grand 19th of April. Baker was in the fight at the bridge, and Harrington the flier of the Lexington company. Both now sleep with their comrades who had gone before, and there are few even of the children of these grand old patriots left to participate in the centennial of their glory. When the next centennial anniversary of the "Concord fight" is reached, none of those who now celebrate its first century of blessings will be alive to commemorate the second; but who can doubt that out of these patriotic festivities, and those which are to follow in the next eight years, liberty will take a new birth and our grandchildren and great-grandchildren receive through us the gift which came from our grandfathers and great-grandfathers. It is a consummation most devoutly to be wished, and we can only pray that the exclamation of Samuel Adams, when he heard the guns at Lexington, "This is a glorious morning!" may prove as truly prophetic in the future as they have proved in the past.

DR. STORRS' LECTURE.

It is a singular thing that the older Powers of Europe will barely acknowledge the existence of an American nation. They sneer at what is termed our new-fangled nationality—day that

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